

Police Department convinced

School keeps its traffic guard

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A vocal gathering of parents and faculty members, with some assistance from Oakland City Council Member Carter Gilmore, has convinced the Police Department to abandon its plan to replace the adult traffic guard at Burckhalter School with student monitors.

The decision to keep the adult guard at Edwards Avenue and Greenly Drive ended Thursday night's meeting between Capt. Howard Dilsaver, who heads the Police Department's school traffic detail, and concerned Burckhalter parents and faculty.

More than 50 parents attended the session in the school auditorium.

According to Dilsaver, the pro-

posed change resulted from a recent survey of school traffic crossings indicating that the Burckhalter crossing rated a lower priority than another post without a permanent adult guard.

Dilsaver said he has a budget of \$175,000 for adult guards, but it would cost \$1 million to man all the traffic posts with adults. He said everybody wants the same thing but the Police Department, like every other city department, has taken one budget cut after another and the money just isn't there.

The police captain said his plan was to reinstate the student guard detachment at Burckhalter, which was phased out last June.

However, parents and faculty members loudly voiced their disapproval of the plan. Mike Hopkins, principal at Burckhalter, and most of the parents said the children are sent to school to learn reading, writing and arithmetic, and not to direct traffic.

Besides voicing a concern about the students' grades, parents and faculty members felt student monitors would not be able to handle the heavy traffic on Edwards Avenue.

"If that crossing guard saves one child's life, she has done her job," one parent remarked.

Gilmore told the group he was in full support of retaining an adult guard at the site since Edwards Ave-

nue is a major connection for motorists traveling between the MacArthur and Nimitz freeways.

"If we lose one person's life, we can never regain it," he said.

Gilmore said he would see if the City Council could appropriate more money to the Police Department for adult crossing guards.

After more than an hour of discussion, Dilsaver said, "I think you have made your point tonight." He said he has now decided to permanently keep the adult crossing guards at Burckhalter and at the other school site and "try to justify the budget increase."

The decision was greeted with hearty applause.

How a kid gets to know the dimensions of trouble

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Maybe a kid wouldn't get into trouble if he knew how much trouble he was getting into.

Twice a month at the Oak Center, 1231 Adeline St., Oakland youngsters learn what is involved in breaking the law and getting caught.

They talk to cops, and cops talk to them.

"Many of the kids are not aware of the indignities and embarrassment of being arrested. They don't even know money is needed to post bail," says Dolores Rubin of the Oak Center Cultural Center.

"And most important, they do not know that any wrongdoing in their childhood can follow them the rest of their lives and often interfere with their ability as adults to get jobs."

Rubin helped start the Crime Prevention Program over a year ago because she grew up in West Oakland and was concerned over the changing attitudes - for the worse - toward police.

"The old-time cop used to walk the beat and knew the people in the area," she says. "He understood the problems, dealt with the problems and was the neighborhood authority in enforcing the law."

As officers moved into cars, they lost contact, she says. The Oak Center program is an attempt to put people and police back into touch.

More than 125 kids aged 9 to 18 have come to the center's Victorian building to learn about the law from the people who enforce it. Counselors, teachers and principals send them from Cole and Lafayette elementary schools, Martin Luther King and Lowell junior high schools and McClymonds High School.

"This is a big project, and I wish we had more people," says Capt. Howard Dilsaver of the police department's Youth Services Division, who helped found the program.

Recently, police officer Bob

Sirvain answered questions at the center from 25 youngsters.

"You would be surprised at the misconceptions they have about police," he says. "It's not something that has to do with anything they have experienced or seen. It is what they may have heard from their peers or friends who have been in trouble with the police."

"If someone they know gets caught doing something and receives a reprimand, it is blown out of proportion by word of mouth to his peers that he was taken into a dark room and beaten."

Many West Oakland residents, Rubin says, think police are insensitive to their needs. Some young people, she says, feel that they are intimidated, harassed and sometimes arrested for offenses that would be ignored if their skin were a different color.

The program, she says, gives youngsters a chance to voice their fears in a give-and-take process with officers.

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Policeman to Take Juvenile Law Course

Sgt. Howard H. Dilsaver of the Oakland Police Department juvenile division will attend the Juvenile Law Enforcement Officers Training Course at the Asilomar Conference Grounds, Jan. 10-16.

The course is sponsored by the California Youth Authority and Justice Department, and the Delinquency Control Institute at the University of Southern California.